



News Release

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Education

Improvements being made to French second-language programs and services (anglophone sector) (08/03/14)

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FREDERICTON (CNB) - Improvements announced today by Education Minister Kelly Lamrock to French Second Language (FSL) programs will create a universally accessible system that will better serve all students, create equal learning environments which will improve scores in literacy, math and science, and put New Brunswick on track to having the best education systems in the country.



(Multimedia)

"New Brunswick is ready to provide a quality second-language education to all students, which is far from currently the case," Lamrock said. "The French Second Language program improvements will allow us to increase the number of New

Brunswick children who graduate reaching the proficiency targets for speaking French as second language. They will also improve our scores in literacy, math and science by giving all children an equal chance at a positive classroom environment."

The program reforms will see all students begin FSL in Grade 5 through a universal Intensive French program. Following Grade 5, after seeing how their children performed, parents will be able to choose either Immersion or a Post Intensive French program beginning in Grade 6.

"Our education plan, When kids come first, sets an ambitious vision of having the best education system in Canada," the minister said. "Today's reality is far short of that vision. We rank last in Canada in the areas of literacy, math and science; we are falling short of our goal of providing all students with a firm foundation in French as a second language; we are creating classrooms where class composition issues are exacerbated through streaming; and we have limited opportunities to offer our younger students enriching opportunities in the areas such as art, music and physical education. If we are ever to achieve self-sufficiency in New Brunswick, all of this must change, and with the improvements we are announcing today, I am certain it will."

Other improvements to the FSL programs involve:

- Making Grade 6, following Grade 5 Intensive French, as the sole entry point to French

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Immersion.

- Grandfathering students currently enrolled in Early Immersion.
- Beginning all FSL programming for the anglophone sector at Grade 5 with Intensive French and, within three years, the requirement for Intensive French would be mandatory for all students in the anglophone sector.
- Establishing a plan to use the gained instructional time from the elimination of Core French at the elementary grades for art, music, physical education and enrichment opportunities.
- Requiring all students, Post Intensive French and late immersion, to continue FSL instruction through to Grade 12.
- Developing a new policy on "Bilingual Learning Environments" which will require (a) principals of schools with Grade 6-12 students to take full advantage of having a student body with 100 per cent exposure to French through integrating conversational French opportunities into school life, and (b) requiring principals of elementary schools to provide co-curricular programming introducing students to the bilingual and French culture in New Brunswick.
- Setting the proficiency target for the Post Intensive Core students at the Intermediate Level and for Late Immersion at the Intermediate Plus Level.
- Amending Policy 309 as required to reflect the changes to the FSL programs and to include the Intensive French/Post Intensive French models.

"I fully realize that this is a very emotional issue for many New Brunswickers, and that many people have differing thoughts and opinions on the approach government should be taking to improve French second language learning and the systems overall performance," Lamrock said. "After considerable reflection and after carefully listening to the many views in this debate over the past several weeks, I am confident that our government is taking the proper decision that will serve the best interests of all New Brunswick students now and into the future."

Lamrock said he has the highest confidence in the province's dedicated teachers, educators, and district staff who will be delivering the improved FSL programs to New Brunswick's students.

A review of FSL programs and services was initiated by the Department of Education in July 2007 and was undertaken by commissioners Jim Croll and Patricia Lee. The report contains 18 recommendations to improve the state of French second language learning in New Brunswick.

A complete list of the FSL program improvements, and other information and documents pertaining to the FSL review, are available online at: <http://www.gnb.ca/0000/eng-cu-e.asp>.

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EDITOR'S NOTE: Background information follows. MEDIA CONTACT: Jason Humphrey, communications, Education, 506-444-4714.

Backgrounder
Improvements to French Second Language programs
within the anglophone school system

- In July 2007, the Department of Education initiated a comprehensive review of French second language programming and services within the anglophone school system.
 - The review is one of the key actions under the government's plan, *When kids come first*, to build the best education system in the country.
 - The mandate of the review was to engage students, parents, teachers, educators and identified stakeholders in a review of the current models of French second-language instruction, and to make recommendations designed to assist the anglophone sector in developing French second-language programs that will be in the best interests of all students.
 - Jim Croll and Patricia Lee served as commissioners of the review. Between July 2007 and February 2008, they reviewed the current models of French second-language instruction; engaged students, teachers, educators and stakeholders; and analyzed previous reports and data relative to the topic.
 - The French Second Language Commission delivered its final report to Education Minister Kelly Lamrock on Feb. 18. The commission publicly released the report on Feb. 27.
 - The French Second Language report contains 18 recommendations that the French Second Language Commission believes will be of crucial importance in improving the state of French second-language learning in New Brunswick.
 - On March 14, Education Minister Kelly Lamrock announced the Government of New Brunswick's response to the French Second Language Report and what changes will be made to the anglophone sector's French Second Language programs.
 - The objective of the changes are to improve the delivery French Second Language programs, improve French Second Language proficiency results, and improve our students overall performance, especially in the areas of literacy, math and science.
 - Below is an outline of the changes to the French Second Language program in the anglophone sector:
1. All FSL programming for the anglophone sector will begin at Grade 5 with a universal Intensive French program and within three years, the requirement for Intensive French would be mandatory for all students in the anglophone sector.
 2. Following Grade 5, students (and parents) would be given the option of choosing the Late Immersion model or the Post Intensive French model.
 3. Students currently enrolled in Early Immersion would be grandfathered.
 4. The Department of Education would develop a plan to use the gained instructional time from the elimination of Core French for art, music, physical education and enrichment opportunities.
 5. A new policy on "Bilingual Learning Environments" will be developed which will require (a) principals of schools with Grade 6-12 students to take full advantage of having a student body with 100 per cent exposure to French through integrating conversational French opportunities into school life, and (b) requiring principals of elementary schools to provide co-curricular programming introducing students to the bilingual and French culture in New Brunswick.
 6. The Post Intensive French model (Grades 6 to 12) would include new intensive FSL instruction modules built into the English Program.
 7. All students who choose to enrol in Post Intensive French beginning in 2009-2010 would be required to continue FSL instruction through to Grade 12.
 8. The proficiency target for the Intensive French model would remain the Intermediate Level at this time, with the potential to increase the target depending on overall student success.
 9. The Late Immersion model, beginning in Grade 6, would be adopted as the sole

- French Immersion model for Anglophone students in New Brunswick.
10. The Late Immersion model would be strengthened through improved teaching selection and training and improved methods of FSL instruction. This includes adapting methods of instruction which are successful in the Intensive French model (student driven/project based instruction).
 11. All students who choose to enrol in the Late Immersion model beginning in 2009-2010 would be required to continue FSL instruction through to Grade 12.
 12. The proficiency target for the Late Immersion model would remain at the Intermediate Plus Level at this time, with the potential to increase the target depending on overall student success.
 13. High school students in Late Immersion and Post Intensive French would be allowed to take their Grades 10-12 math and science courses in English, but provide the option for instruction to be in French where resources allow.
 14. All other existing French Second Language Programs in New Brunswick schools would be phased-out beginning in the 2008-2009 school year.
 15. Policy 309 would be amended as required to reflect the above recommendations, and to include the Intensive French/Post Intensive French models.
 16. The Department of Education would immediately strike a working group to develop the above policy.
 17. The Department of Education would undertake a review of human resources and professional development opportunities to maximize the deployment of French Immersion teachers to increase the inclusive nature of Late Immersion.
 18. The Department of Education would work towards having evaluation regimes in place by 2011-2012 which will monitor school and district effectiveness of meeting FSL targets in the new structure.
 19. The Department of Education and government would publicly state that the target of "70 per cent of all students reaching the intermediate level" is considered an interim objective "on the road" to Policy 309 proficiency levels.
 20. The Department of Education's future accreditation program for the Faculties of Education in New Brunswick universities (see *WKCF*) would include screening requirements for future FSL teachers, and that pre-service and in-service teacher training programs would be modified to ensure high level FSL and high level academic instruction in the Late Immersion and Intensive French/Post Intensive French models.
 21. The Department of Education would re-profile resources from the Early Immersion model and Core French model (Grades 1-4) into strengthening the Late Immersion model and the Intensive French/Post Intensive French models.
 22. Special needs students within the Late Immersion model and the Post Intensive French model would receive the integrated services they require, on parity with each other.

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